

kindness, did everything possible and much that was far beyond the call of duty to make me comfortable and to keep in me the will to live. Others never to be forgotten in this first phase of my illness are the Williams Hargraves of Lansdowne and the Frank Kaltmans of Newark, New Jersey. They sent out the "first alarms" and came to my immediate rescue. While in Philadelphia I was happy to see two Fairhapians — Paul Gaston and Mrs. Joseph Payson, both of whom worked on "Viltis" while I was hospitalized in Alabama.

#### THE ROAD TO CHICAGO AND NEAR RUIN

In spite of all complications, once medication was begun I began showing immediate improvement; but the hand of fate once more intervened, not wanting me to get off too easily!

Someone I knew arrived from Chicago. Her intentions were no doubt good, but the results, disastrous and almost fatal. This lady, without communicating with my family, and against their explicit telephone and telegraphic instructions to the hospital that I not be released, and also contrary to the suggestions of a bona fide Chicago Committee who were making arrangements to have me admitted to the Chic. Municipal Sanatorium, took upon herself the task of bringing me to Chicago and putting me in the Chicago Cook County Hospital. All this she did in her sincere effort to save me the enormous expense of hospitalization in Philadelphia, which in three weeks amounted to almost six hundred dollars. However, by bringing me to Chicago when she did, I lost my status as an emergency patient, and had to drop to the foot of a list of some five hundred who were ahead of me—and in only a few days there would have been a bed for me in the Sanatorium! I was led like a lamb to slaughter and was too ill to protest.

**Cook County Hospital in Chicago**

On my arrival at Cook County Hospital I was placed in the Emergency Ward of the Men's Building, and immediately things started happening. It would take a tome and much more strength than I yet have to describe my experiences in this hospital. It would make interesting though not pleasant reading.

The paddy wagons (and I was brought in one from the train to the hospital) are busy twenty-four hours a day bringing in "cases" picked up on skid row, in alleys, from the streets and the slums. For the most part, at least in my ward, the white patients were mostly alcoholics, with a number of DT's, drunks who had lost their minds. The things that took place in that bedlam and "Snake Pit" were enough to make any one not accustomed to such an environment sick. On my first night there one of the DT's who was restrained—bound with leather straps to the bed — managed to cut his bonds with a razor blade (it was then that I understood why my shaving equipment was taken from me upon my entry to the hospital, and why we were fed from a soggy paper plate and with a spoon that served as our only utensil for coffee, meat or other food). This poor DT, standing stark naked, roused the patient next to him and went after him with the razor blade, demanding twenty dollars for whiskey. There were no bells nor other means of alarm to attract the attention of the nurses who were on the other side of a ninety man ward; we screamed (and you know what my voice is) and banged on the tables until help came. It was most fortunate that I was not the victim that first night for I would have died of fright — and I almost did anyway. That was but the beginning of unexpected happenings. There followed days of disgust and nights of sleeplessness and fear. Some of the incidents were too disgusting to

describe. The wards were crowded, the beds close to the seriously ill, the insane and the dying. In such an atmosphere I was expected to recover! I have tried to reason that perhaps it was the will of God that I should see the evils of alcoholism, its resulting agonies, and the horrors of sickness and pain. Yet, every night, crying, I asked God, "Why, Lord!"

As in most hospitals today, Cook County was understaffed even though it paid higher wages to its nurses and attendants than most hospitals. Often there were only two nurses for a ninety bed ward. The nurses and aides were, for the most part, negroes. They were hard working, conscientious and sympathetic beyond belief. They had their hands more than full, particularly with the DT's who required frequent bed changes, for as a result of their mental condition, they often wallowed in their "stools" and drank their voidings as a substitute for whiskey. Yet the nurses and aides remained cheerful and did what they possibly could for us.

During this period I had been losing ground and had begun to fear for my sanity. I had reached a low ebb, weighing only eighty pounds. My friends were trying various avenues to secure a bed for me in some sanatorium, and the Chicago friends, with the help of certain of my friends in Denver, were making arrangements for me to be sent to a sanatorium in Denver, when overnight a miracle occurred in the form a transfer to Spivak, Colorado.

"Go West, Young Man"

The angels this time appeared in the persons of Mr. I. Friedman and Jerry Auerbach. In previous years they had sponsored my folk dance classes, participated in them and been my hosts in Denver. I had been aware of their connection with the sanatorium. When they learned of my illness, they started things going and made arrangements for my entry to the Jewish Consumptive Relief Society's sanatorium. They contacted Mr. Joseph Woolf of the Chicago office, who also was known to me, and arrangements were made for an immediate transfer, to Spivak, Colorado which came none too soon. Thus, in the company of my "God-sent sisters", Mrs. Jerry Joris and Mrs. Charlotte Chen, Mrs. Paulina Urbutis, my aunt, and Alfredo Manat, I was placed in a roomette on the Zephyr and sent on to Denver.

In Denver I was met by Ray Mathews (Matjosaitis), a friend of the past twenty years, and his wife Lillian, and taken to my "new home." I arrived at the sanatorium nearer death than life. I was in such serious condition that I was not even undressed. As I was later told, the margin between death and life was much too narrow for comfort. I arrived in Colorado on July 24th, and until August 3rd I suffered agonizing pain. Visitors, except for Ray, were barred, and a twenty-four hour a day watch was kept over me.

The merciful God had pity on me and heard the prayers of my many friends, and on August 3rd the intense pain was gone; I was able to sit up under my own power, wash myself and eat unassisted. From that day I showed improvement, gained weight, and headed toward recovery. True, it has not been as smooth as all that. There have been many off days and set-backs and days of great pain and discomfort, for instance during the period of the spontaneous pneumothorax, but none of this can compare with the great distress of the pre-August 3rd period.

#### JCRS Sanatorium, Spivak, Colorado

The Jewish Consumptive Relief Society's Sanatorium is located in the western city limits of Denver in full view of the Rocky Mountains. It is a beautiful location. The grounds have more the appearance of a col-

lege campus than a sanatorium. The buildings are of varied architecture, built along a mall, and the grounds are beautifully landscaped. There are no wards, and its four hundred patients are housed either in single rooms or with two to a room (I have a single room with an eastern exposure). All rooms have closets and private washrooms, and everything is spick-and-span.

The food is unexcelled and is of great variety. Though cooked in the kosher manner, the food covers the Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Irish and other types in preparation. Their desserts are unbelievable in range: delicious strudles, pastries, pies and fruits of the season. It seems to be prepared in a home kitchen rather than in an institution.

The service at the sanatorium is out of this world. Fifty dollars a day could not secure me as much. The nurses and doctors are sympathetic and truly wonderful, taking a personal interest in each patient.

Though the funds for the upkeep of this wonderful place are raised by a Jewish organization, the sanatorium is non-sectarian, and its patients cover the nationalities of the world. There are many Jews, and they may be in majority, but there are plenty of Irish, Mexicans and Italians here, as well as Russians, Hungarians, Scandinavians and others; and it seems that the Patients' Council, their little paper and other such activities are run by Gentiles.

The Catholic patients, and there seem to be many, are spiritually cared for by Father Flannagan of nearby St. Michael's Church. He is a wonderful, silver-haired padre, with great understanding and love.

On the whole, this place is a great credit to the Jewish people and to their charity. Anti-Semitism should be sent here, and I know that they would go away shamefacedly and better men. The motto of the sanatorium is "KUL HA'MKAYEM NEFESH AKHAT K'EELOO KEEYEM OLAM MALEH" — He who restores even one life is as if he restored the whole world (Talmud).

There is a theatre where movies are shown, a huge library and a large school for occupational therapy. In general, this is a place where patients, unlike other institutions, are content to stay until their cure is completed. Why can not other institutions pattern after the JCRS and the National Jewish Sanatorium (another great institution in Denver)?

#### My Profoundest Gratitude

There is an Irish saying that "God never shuts one door without first opening another." This has been more than true in my case, and the "other door" is my many friends. Their kindnesses have surpassed anything and everything that I could imagine. All have rallied alike to my cause, financially and with prayers: Irish, Welsh, Lithuanians, Jews, Chinese, Japanese, Polish, Americans, Negroes and whites; and they have been of many faiths: Catholic, Jewish, Methodists, Baptists, Quaker, Mormon, Unitarians, etc. This, indeed, has been possible through the blessings of God alone. He has opened the "other door" for me, unworthy of His mercies as I am, and His kindness overwhelms me.

The enumeration of all the individuals and groups who have been and are working toward my care and recovery would be a great task. From the Pacific coast to the Atlantic, up into Canada, all have rallied with love, money and prayers. All and each collectively and individually, I press warmly your hands and humbly kiss with all the gratitude my heart contains. God grant me that I be worthy of your love and devotion. God bless you all and grant us strength and peace.

PAX DOMINUS SEMPER VOBISCUM — May the peace of the Lord always be with you.

Pasimatysim (surely we shall see each other again),  
Vyts - Fin



#### WENETTA CHILDS NOTED PAINTER'S SUBJECT

Carolus Verhaeren, noted Flemish painter of Antwerp, Belgium, and scion of painters, writers and sculptors, who now resides in La Jolla, California, painted former Chicagoan Wenetta Grybas Childs in Lithuanian costume on a 28x22 canvas and has called it "Lithuanian Girl." It is being exhibited throughout the country. Mrs. Childs, now residing in Solana Beach, California, is a former LYS dancer and dance partner of Vyts Belajus.

#### LILLIAN SCHLESNA A BEDSIDE TEACHER

Miss Lillian Schlesna, International House folk dancer, who spent her summer in Canada and the scenic Gaspe region, accepted a new position upon her return from vacation. She is now a high school bedside teacher at the famous Billings Hospital, orthopedic section, on the University of Chicago campus. Best of luck, Lil.

#### DE GRILLE PROGRAM DIRECTOR IN BUFFALO

Miss Lolla DeGrille is the new program director at the International Institute in Buffalo, New York, taking the place of Miss Katherine Haviland who is now in Israel.

Miss DeGrille has an excellent folk dance background. She is a native of Hungary. Prior to World War II, she was the program director of the International Institute in New York City where one of the early folk dance institutes was held and many of the present leaders were trained. Miss DeGrille was one of the instructors. Prior to her return to Buffalo she was for several years program director with the International Institute of Detroit, Michigan.

#### AMERICANS ABROAD

Madelynne Greene suffered a broken foot last spring. Though in a cast, it did not stop her from teaching at the Stockton camp and doing a most excellent job. Nor did said cast prevent her from traveling in Europe. She spent a gay time in Paris, England and Scotland.

Millie (Mrs. Oscar) Libaw from Los Angeles, California, flew to Israel on a recent holiday.

Helen Pomerance, Chicago, spent her annual hostel bicycling vacation in Germany, France, Belgium and Holland.

Emily Mucha and Emily and Sophie Czernek, Chicagoans, spent an enjoyable vacation in Mexico.

Miss Katherine Haviland, who was instrumental in the growth of folk dancing at the International Institute and Buffalo, New York, in general, is now inspiring the same spirit in her Arab charges in Acre (near Haifa), Israel. She recently visited the Isle of Cyprus where she spent a delightful month on that scenic isle, amid the ancient ruins and castles built by the Crusaders. Miss Haviland is with the Friends (Quaker) Service Committee.

Morry Gelman, the moving spirit of the folk dance groups in Minnesota, left for Munich, Germany, in October, where he will work as an engineer with the A-